

NORTHEAST DELTA HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY (NEDHSA)

Board Meeting MINUTES

May 11, 2021

Remote meeting held via ZOOM format

5:30PM

Call to Order Meeting called to order by Michael Shipp and prayer was led by Mike Shipp and a quorum was met.

Adopt Agenda: A Motion was made by Yvonne Lewis seconded by Latanya Whiteside to approve /accept the Agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Adopt Minutes of February 9: A Motion was made by Yvonne Lewis and seconded by Rev Shawn Hornsby to approve / accept the Minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Board Members Present:

Mike Shipp, Latanya Whiteside, Thelma Merrells, Dr. E. H. Baker and Yvonne Lewis

Board Absent: Rev. Shawn Hornsby

Northeast Delta HSA staff present: Dr. Monteic Sizer and Delores Harris

Ownership Linkage-Recognition of Guests: None

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – No requests for comment.

GOVERNANCE PROCESS/EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS for DECISIONS

Upcoming Events/Community Action

Like other state and federal agencies, Northeast Delta deferred/temporarily suspended sending vulnerable communities to collections due to their inability to pay for clinical services. As of May 2021, we resumed sending billing statements to patients as we stated we would. In April 2021, we let our patients know what to expect in May 2021. Additionally, patients who owe outstanding fees for services will be required to pay the full amount owed for the time payments were suspended. Those who do not or cannot, will be placed on a payment plan and handled according to our contract with the Office of Debt Recovery.

Again, to have asked vulnerable, marginalized communities to pay fees when they likely didn't have the financial ability to do so, would have created further stress and forced many to abandon life-saving clinical services they relied upon. As a state safety-net behavioral health provider of services to vulnerable communities, we have a clinical, state, and moral obligation to do no harm to the patients we are committed to serving.

Our Prevention and Wellness hosted two annual Take Back Box days. Events happened in Monroe, Morehouse, and Madison Parishes. Ms. Lewis assisted and partnered with us in Madison Parish.

Dr. Monteic A. Sizer continues to be asked to join statewide panels as a subject matter expert relative to the state's Covid-19 response. The most recent LDH Office of Community Partnerships and Health Equity panel focused on the disproportionate deaths in the African American community. Mistrust was discussed as well within this population relative to Covid-19 vaccination. On February 27, Dr. Sizer was asked by the Urban League of Louisiana to discuss trauma and related mental

illnesses at its Empowerment and Policy Conference. Upcoming panels Dr. Sizer will participate in include a faith-based response and examining how negative social determinants of health contribute to health care inequities and untimely death outcomes. Dr. Sizer just recently completed an interview for the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness Conquer Covid19 statewide media campaign.

Northeast Delta departments continue to develop plans for a phased, full reopening model where clients are seen face-to-face. All plans include universal precaution measures, technology, PPE gear, etc. We have already secured many of the items needed to ensure the safety of staff and clients. All staff are working from their Northeast Delta assigned workstations. The only exception is a few DD staff. They are working a flex schedule to avoid all staff be at their cubicles at once. We continue to require face coverings in all agency common areas. We also continue to practice social distancing and office screenings before individuals enter our buildings to avoid the community spread of COVID-19.

We continue to participate in many social media campaigns, including suicide prevention and various addiction ones. We have also started a massive digital public awareness campaign about our programs and various services. This digital campaign includes Google, website, news banners, various social media outlets, etc. One commercial features our agency, and the other discusses opioids and what we are doing about it.

I am sad to report we had a recent staff to pass of COVID-19 exposure. It is believed she contracted it after attending a family gathering. We are in contact with the family and making sure that our staff members are able to fully process the loss of a colleague.

We have a virtual Lunch and Learn May 12, 2021 from 12:00 PM – 12:30 PM. Our special guest will be a representative from MADD, Mothers against Drunk Driving.

Our contract to outsource our pharmacy services as a cost saver with GEONOA Pharmacy has been fully executed. Again, we are maintaining our current infrastructure. GEONOA will give us maximum flexibility and improve our overall services to regional clients.

We are partnering with LSU Ochsner Conway to administer Northeast Delta staff the Covid-19 Pfizer vaccine. Additionally, we are still planning to have GEONOA Pharmacy offer the Covid-19 vaccine to Northeast Delta staff who prefer the Moderna vaccine. We will be offering the vaccine to our outpatient and inpatient clients. We will do the same for contractors as well.

I am happy to report that all Northeast Delta HSA staff, in good standing, will receive merit pay increases in July 2021. This recognition is welcomed due to their hard work and dedication to our overall agency's vision, mission, and tenets.

Executive Director –

- Monthly Executive Director Report
- Monthly Fiscal Report
- Emergency Executive Succession with Organizational Chart (page 12)

After the ED's report, the monthly Fiscal Report and the Emergency Executive Succession Plan in the Event of an Extended or Permanent Absence by the Executive Director was sent to the board via email along with other documents needed for the May board meeting. It was discussed and approved as submitted. A Motion was made by Yvonne Lewis and seconded by Latanya Whiteside to approve / accept reports and Emergency Succession Plan shall be implemented as stated in said document. The Plan was put in the board book for future reference. Motion passed unanimously

Chairperson's Role (page 8) No changes noted.

Financial Planning & Budgeting/Financial Condition and Activities – *With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the ED shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.*

NEDHSA's FY20-21 appropriated budget is \$15,169,624. Our SGF = \$7,730,554. Our IAT = \$6,665,226. Self-generated = \$773,844.

BOARD MANAGEMENT – *Ongoing*

- Board Self-Evaluation
- Board Development

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURN

Next Meeting – **June 8, 2021**

Location/Format: **TBD**